

## **James W. Perkins**

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My sheer determination has inspired me all throughout my life. It did not fail to shine on me when I accepted the responsibility of representing James W. Perkins, a World War Two veteran. I projected my determination upon this tribute, even when the odds were stacked against me after weeks of time-consuming research with no results. I generally focused on resources from the Internet, telephone numbers, and newspaper articles pertaining to the same time period as World War II. Despite my efforts, I found myself run dry of resources and out of time; all my study and investigation had failed to provide me with any substantial or sufficient information. Unfortunately, I was unable to compose a tribute to James W. Perkins.

I researched eleven telephone numbers located in Chula Vista, California, with the last names of Perkins. I accessed these numbers via *Yahoo people search* engine, on the internet. The following is a list of the names and telephone numbers of the people I contacted in hopes of finding any relatives or information concerning James W. Perkins:

1. Chas Perkins (619)\*\*\*-\*\*\*\*
2. Craig M Perkins (619)\*\*\*-\*\*\*\*
3. D Perkins (619)\*\*\*-\*\*\*\*
4. Elmer Myrtle Perkins (619)\*\*\*-\*\*\*\*
5. J Perkins (619)\*\*\*-\*\*\*\*
6. Kelly Perkins (619)\*\*\*-\*\*\*\*
7. M Perkins (619)\*\*\*-\*\*\*\*
8. M Perkins (619)\*\*\*-\*\*\*\*
9. S Perkins (619)\*\*\*-\*\*\*\*
10. Steven Perkins (619)\*\*\*-\*\*\*\*

I informed each stranger that I am a student attending Eastlake High School. I explained the nature of my business concerning James W. Perkins, a veteran who died in World War II. I explained my research was for a school project, and was also involved with the city of Chula Vista. In addition, there would be a memorial for the veterans in the Chula Vista area, who died for our country. In honor of the veterans, the city of Chula Vista would be renaming certain streets after them, and James W. Perkins was amongst the selected veterans. If they were related and could provide me with any factual and accurate information, I attempted to set up a convenient meeting time for them. If this was not possible, I asked them to refer me to someone who could assist me.

I approached the telephone conversations with preparedness. I made a list of questions, and armed myself with a tape recorder. The following is a list of the basic questions I prepared for the expected meeting:

1. When was he born?
2. Where was he born?
3. Where did he grow up?
4. What did his parents do for a living?
5. What did he do for a living?
6. What medals did he receive, how many?
7. Did he have any siblings?
8. If he did was he the oldest, youngest?

9. Why did he join the war?
10. Was he married?
11. Did he have any children?
12. How many years was he married (if he was)?
13. Who was he married to (if he was)?
14. What branch of military was he in?
15. What rank was he?
16. Where was he stationed?
17. What was his best personality trait?
18. What were some of his hobbies on the side?
19. What high school(s) did he attend?
20. What high school did he graduate from?
21. Did he go to college or a university? if so, which?
22. What was your favorite memory of him?
23. If you were to describe him in seven words or less, what would they be?
24. Where was he stationed when he died?
25. How did he die?
26. What was his mission?
27. When did he die?

My efforts proved unsuccessful, even with the prepared speech I had given each stranger. Consequently, my questions were of no use and a waste. I recall three particular reactions from strangers through telephone calls. One man, by the name of James Perkins, repeatedly asked me to explain my project. After which seemed the hundredth time of politely explaining, he defensively interrupted me stating he had no desire to get involved, and wanted no involvement whatsoever. Another man who answered the phone was elderly and cranky. He assumed I was a telemarketer and brutally told me off before rudely hanging up. However, one woman was very polite, kind, and eager to help. She said her brother-in-law was a man by the name of James Perkins, but is still alive. From all the phone calls I had made, she had been the only one who gave me the time of day.

After a frustrating search for someone willing to assist me with any information, I found my way to the library. I spent several tiresome hours researching through old newspapers and books written during World War II. It appeared as if there were no documents or records of a James W. Perkins anywhere in the library with an unfinished project and a sense of an upcoming failure.

I had one last attempt to research for any facts and information on James W. Perkins. I was at the internet's mercy and prayed for success. Nevertheless, I was unsuccessful again. I spent all day on the computer until my eyes stung with weariness, my wrists were sore, and my head felt heavy. Here is a sample of the select few of the several web sites I researched:

1. <http://politicalgraveyard.com/bio/perkins.html>
2. <http://google.yahoo.com/bin/query?p=james+perkins&hc=0&hs=>
3. [http://search.excite.com/search.gw?search=james\\_perkins&look=excite\\_home\\_us](http://search.excite.com/search.gw?search=james_perkins&look=excite_home_us)
4. <http://www.dos.cornell.edu/dos/dos/PerkinsJaperkins.html>
5. [http://www.iath.net/dir/usa/california\\_southern/a-f.html](http://www.iath.net/dir/usa/california_southern/a-f.html)

After using every available resource to gather any facts of James W. Perkins, I ran out of time and ideas. All I know of this veteran is that he lived in Chula Vista, California,

before his death and probably possessed highly esteemed medals He is undoubtedly hero to our country and a well-respected man He contributed and fought for our nation, and died in combat as a man of admirable feats In addition to this project, I have learned that many people are suspicious and can be guarded about their family history. Others are private toward their background and prefer to remain uninvolved. Although my unfinished tribute of James W. Perkins has been an unsuccessful and disappointing failure, there is a tremendous satisfaction inside me because I stuck with it, and I did not give up.